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MISCELLANEOUS.

THE SPROUT FAMILY.

The Sprout family was exceedingly numerous in the Village of Arrowford, which is situated about 15 miles above the Alesbury Falls, and was quite wealthy. They had setted the place principally, having removed from the Eastern part of Pennsylvania some 20 years before, in number, then, about half a dozen families; which had increased and multiplied until almost every respectable sign board in the place had the name of Sprout on it, and two thirds of the farms around ware calied Sprout Farms, in consequence of being, or having been owned by them. They were a thriving, but close dealing and cautious set of men—always active aud enterprising in matters relating to their own interest—honest, but exceedingly exact in their dealings with others and with each other, and possessing just about as much public spirit, generosity, and charitatable feelings, as is common to that class of men. In their emigration they had left behind them but one solitary branch of the family, and that one, being poor and unable to join with the more fortunate, was of course soon forgotton, so that in the lapse of so many years it had grown almost wholly out of remembrance. One of those affairs, in which love and interest were so intimately connected that the readers would feel a little pleasure in being introduced to the parties, was in preparation on a fine summer morning, when I happened to be in the village, on business. The birds were flying about and singing sweetly among the trees which shaded the low houses—the walk before the door was swept clean and looked neat, and the girls peeped out of the windows in clusters—their cheeks bearing visible mareks of the industry of the morning, some of them looking, indeed as though they had been rubbed a little with coarse towels, or had been in contact with rough faces. Every thing seemed lively and cheerful, and I took my post by the front window of the tavern bar room, that I might mark, at once, what was going forward within and without.—The landlord hppened to be the brother of the groom—in the course of the morning Sprouts assembled there prety generally, to drink punch, and smoke a cigar with the was to-be-happy-man.

Towards noon, a venerable pedestrin, clad in a thread-bare coat, stained velvet breeches, soilad waistcoat, and hat and shoes at least as venerable in appearance as himself, armed with a rough walking stick, and seeming much fatigued, was seen travelling down the street towards the Inn.

The novelty of the sight attracted every eye, but the unknown having arrived oposit the Inn, deliberately uncased a pair of spectacles, and having surveyed the sign a few moments, made for the house. The way was cleared for him, and when he reached the middle of the bar room, he enquired for Charles Sprout, the landlord—Charles came forward "Cousin Charles," said he, "I am very glad to see you ;" reaching fourth his hand at the same time. Cousin Charles, however, appeared wholly indisposed to this familiarity wath one who did not look like having a loose sixpence in his pocket, and replied abruptly, drawing back—"who are you? I don't know you." "Not know me," replied the old mad—"I am Nicholas Sprout, your father's own brother, and am come down, that I may see my dear relations in this plesant town, before I die." "I guess," said Charles, smiling contemptuously, "it would have been as well to have died at home—but how are we to know who you are? Assertions do not pass current here, when comeing from men of our appearence." There was a general titter at this colloquy among the young gentlemen, but one of the old Sprouts, who set in the corner, having looked sharply all the while at the stranger, left the room, and calling to one of the boys, said—"This is a bad business for some of you; sure as the world it is Nicholas Sprout, and he'll be easier admitted than gotton clear of, my word for it—a poor soul, he's come down for maintainence, no doubt, and the disgrace of our family comes with him—I'll be off however; See that you don't send him to me!—Saying which he took his way and soon disapeared.

A general whisper was spread around, and operated like a shout among a flock of quales. In fifteen minutes there were but three Sprout faces remaining. They told him of the wedding, and advised him, as he could not be entertained in the village, to go down to old granny Scarum's by the Cross-roads, where he could, for a trifle stay until the busy time was over.

The poor old man however, wished, to go to the wedding—they objected to the distance, and the bad road—his cloaths, his mean appearnce; and still persisted in his going away, until, at last, the tears rolled down his furrowed cheeks, and with a full heart he turned and went out of the house.

Compassion and curiosty induced me to follow him, which I did, leaving the trio of young Sprouts highly tickled with the idea of having gotton clear of their troublesome visitor. But I was struck, when I reached the street, to find every door where a Sprout lived, shut tight—every soul gone from the street. I stood and saw the old man go to three of their doors in succession, and knock and go away. At last he came back and set down on the curb stone oposit the tavern, and I confess my heart was too full to go to him, as he hung down his head and wiped away the tears with an old handkerchief.

He had not remained there long, however, before a gentleman on an elegant horse rode up to him, dismounted, set down beside him, and entered into earnest conversation. There was something so singular in this, that the Sprouts beginning to suspect their relative might not be the poor friendless soul they supposed one after anuther half opned their doors, and stood upon their sills, while one or two ventured to stroll down to the piazza of the Inn, where now the three young gentlemen, whom we left in the bar room had taken their seats, and were listening to the conversation over the way. The respectful familiarity with which the gentleman treated the old man, went so far to confirm these suspicious that a good deal of manœuvring among the Sprout party soon followed—the surmise was spread abroad, and in half an hour a dozen or more were collected at the Inn, and sevreal ventured to go over to the strangers.

Just at this crisis, a splendid gig drove up and an elegant young man spiang out of it, exclaiming, "Ah, Fathe, what's the matter here?—"Nothing, my son," was the reply, "only our good relations, for the most part, have forgotton us, and those who do remember us are so busy that we must go down to the cross-roads and put up for the night." The secret revealed, it was amusing to see how the faces of the mistaken relatives of the good man, changed from white to red and back again; they looked at each other lost in amazement—stupidly enough to be sure. At length Charles ventured to speake:—"My dear uncle, if you will honor my house so much, you shall have every accomodation it can afford." No, not I would not put you to any inconvenience for the world; we will go to the cross-roads." Indeed you shall not," said a dozen at once, for all the Sprouts came flocking around by this time, every one inviting their dear relative home—pressing him, entreating him, almost pulling him by force—insisting their were no accomodations at the cross-roads.

As this scene was going on, the strange gentleman, whispered to Mrs. Sprout that old Mr. Sprout was worth a hundred thousand, and that his relatives would probably lose a round sum by this unlucky breach. This news spread like electric fire through the village, and the women and children came running out to see their rich relative.

Tears of joy, and "God blessing you, sir," together with the most pressing invitation, were as plenty now and as cheap as grass blades in the meadow.—The village, and all that it contained, one would have thought was at his service, but he constantly shook his head—it was too busy a time with them, he said, and his clothes were old, his appearence mean—he might disgrace them—he would, at any rate, go back to the next tavern on the road; and from his purposes all the protestations of leasure, the praise of his person, and even of his old clothes, with the offer of new ones, on loan, in abundance, could not move him; and that night he slept at the Blue Ridge Inn, on his return home, where he narrated this story in good humor. From this place, that morning, he had set out on foot for Arrowford, leaving his attendants behind that he might make a trial of the value his long unvisited relatives set upon him, and which he deemed could only be fairly estimated by presenting himself before them in the garb of his original poverty.

Reeders, perhaps, my smile at this simple tale. Doubtless you fancy the Sprouts a set of rascals, but, look at home—how do you esteem a poor relativ? If your conscience does not condemn you, neither do I, but set it down as a truth—the Sprouts are not the only people in the world who value rich relations higher then poor ones.

CROSSING THE ATLANTIC IN A BALLOON.

It is said by the Philadelphia Ledger that some fears have been expressed that Mr. Wise could not get any person adventurous enough to cross the Atlantic with him in his intended excursion next summer, but it seems there is one daring enough to make the trial. Mr. Pennington, the distvnguished intentor of the flying machine, is now in Baltimore, and is ready to take passage with Mr. W. across the Atlantic at any time it will suit his convenience. Mr. P. is of the opinion that it is only necessary to ascend in the balloon above the cutaent of air, where they will remain stationary until the earth revolves round and Europe comes under them, when the party will descend to the ground. The advantage attending this arrangement is obvious. It will greatly diminish the time required to reach the old continent. The distance to England acrooss the Atlantic is about 3000 miles. The circumferance of the earth is about 24,000; and as it makes one revolution in 24 hours, its motion on its own axis must be at the rate of about 1000 miles an hour; supposing all parallels to be equal; consequently by waiting for Fngland to come to them, instead of going to England, they will reach that country in about three hours. Admitting that they could go in the balloon uniformly at the rate of a mile a minute, they could not possibly reach Eegland in less than three days.

From Tabasco.—By the schooner Argue, five days from Laguna, we have late accounts from Mexico. The whole Mexican force at Laguna, numbering about 2000 men, had marched thence for Tabasco, to suppress the revolt there headed by Gov. Sentamanant. The latter, on the approach of the Mexican army, made a precipitate retreat with 400 men towards the frontier, where he hoped to recruit his forces so as to warrant his returning to attack the central invaders of his province. the probability is that there will be no fighting of bloodshed in this new outbreak.—Sentamanat espoused the side of the Yucatecos when they first stood out, and shortly afterwards turned traitor to them; and now raises the standard of revolt on his own hook, but having no patriotism, he probably has not the courage to carry out the project.—*N. O. Bulletin, 26th ult,*

THE TRADE OF THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY ANE THE HUDSON.

The July number of Hunt's Merchant's Magazine containes an article on the navigation of the Mississippi and its tributaries. It developes a series of facts connected with the progress of steam on the western rivers so truly startling that they almost exceed belief.

Steamers were introduced on the Mississippi from 1811 to 1817. At that time, keel boats were entirely employed.—These made but one trip a year between Pittsburg and New Orleans (1858 miles) and it was almost like going to China or the East Indies, so distant and haszardous seemed the voyage. Only three trips a year were made between Louisville and Pitsburgo a distance of only 403 miles, and which are now run by steamers as often as thirty times a year. To illustrate the wonderful change in travelling and the carriage of freight, the Louisville Whig publishes the commercial chronical for May, 1818, of the port of Louisville. The steamboat Ætna arrived at Shippingport, a few miles below Louisville, from New Orleans, in *thirty-two days.* The steamboat Governor Shelby arrived at Shipingport from New Orleans, in *tweuty days* running time. On the 1st of May, 1818, a hermaphrodite rigged brig barge arrived at Shippingport in *seventy-one days* from New Orleans. A keel boat arrived there on the same day in *one hundred and one days* from New Orleans. The time now occupied in making a trip from New Orleans to Louisville, is between *five and six days.* The change is so rapid and so different from any thing in the history of other nations, that we can only disignate it as *American* progress.

In 1817 the entire tonnage of all the waters of the Mississippi was only 6500 tons. Yet in 1834, after the lapse of 17 years, there were 250 steamers afloat with a tonnage of THIRTY-NINE THOUSAND tons. But during the last eight years the advance has been gigantic. In 1812 no less than 450 steamers were afloat averaging 200 tons of freight each, making an aggregate of 90,000 tons of shipping, built at a cost of $7,000,000.—This is an in crease in 8 years of 130 per cent. Is this not a visible picture of American industry and enterprise as wonderful as the hanging gardens of Babylon, and far more worthy of admiration, because it is the best evidence of the wealth and prosperity of the people. Neither have we yet finished this remarkrble chapter. During the year 1842 there were 4000 flatboats employed. These are temporary structures of 75 tons each, floted to New Orleans heavily laden with flour, corn, bocon, cotton and suger. Their cost of only $105 each indicates how lightly they are put together.

From the Tennessee Agriculturist.

Preservation of Wheat from Weevil.—As our harvest is coming on, it may not be amiss to drop a hint to the numerous readers of your excellent journal, on the most effectual method of preserving our wheat from the weevil. The following plan I have tried for ten years, and find it never to fail. The wheat when cut should be shocked, in from 12 to 14 sheaves in a shock, and this neatly done, and covered with 3 sheaves taken from that number, and let it remain in the field two or three weeks until it is thoroughly cured, then take it in, in fair weather when the dew is off, and thrash and clean it immediately, so that it may not get damp by lying in a bulk then have hogsheads, of about the size that will hold from 15 to 18 bushels each, or barrels or goods boxes will do, but I prefer hogsheads; then get thick dry bark, and build fires near the house where you intend to put your clean wheat about the size of a half bushel in a round pile, set it on fire and let it burn nearly hown to coals then place your hogsherd over the fire mounth down, then raise one edge about three inches to admit the air, and let it remain until the hogshead is so hot you can't bear your hand on the outside; then let two hands put a board under the mounth so that they can carry it mounth down to the place where it is to stand, then turn it on its head and let every litle fellow have his buckets of wheat ready and fiill the hogshead instantly, so that none of the steam or heat may escape in filling; when full it need not be covered, it will remain warm in the centre for several days. In this way I preserve my wheat every year, and have now old wheat which is plump and good as when it was put up last harvest. I had a wagon load ground a few days ago, and a gentleman who supped with me last night said it was remarkably well tasted and equal to our Cincinnati flour. Lastly, it does not injure the grain at all; I put up all my seed-wheat in the same way.

Now if this hasty sketch will be of any advantage (in your opinion) to the Southern farmers, you will please give it a place in your valuable paper. It may be something of the same kind, may be in the back mumbers, as I have not yet read them; if so do what you think is best, and accept my best wishes for yourself and perodical.

Yousr truly.
J. BURNS.

It is believed that the egg of the white weevil is deposited when the wheat is in bloom, as the insect always cuts out of the grain; therefore the process which I hastily sketch in this letter, kills the egg in the grain before it hatches.

J. B.

MULBERRY GROVE, TENN., JULY, 1843.